

The Florida Democrat

Keeping Florida Democrats up to date on news in the state

PNJ: Ex-GOP chair's defense to call attorney general as witness



Former Republican Party of Florida Chairman Jim Greer's defense attorney said today he will try to disqualify Attorney General Bill McCollum from prosecuting the case -- and call the GOP candidate for governor as a defense witness for Greer.

Attorney Cheney Mason said at a news conference he will seek dismissal of the state's charges of grand theft, money laundering and organized fraud against Greer. He said the search warrant

used to gather evidence against Greer was insufficient and that no crime occurred when Greer, as RPOF chairman, contracted with a consulting firm, Victory Strategies LLC, Greer and former party executive director Delmar Johnson had formed.

[Continued on Page 2]

Miami Herald: Carl Hiassen: Bill and Rick are their own worst problems

In the Republican race for governor, Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum finds himself trailing a candidate who has more baggage than J-Lo on a camel safari. The polls show McCollum chasing Rick Scott, whose singular claim to fame was building Columbia/HCA into a healthcare conglomerate that perpetrated the largest Medicare fraud in the history of Medicare.

"The man couldn't keep his own company honest, yet he promises to clean up Tallahassee. It's hilarious."

Hiassen on Rick Scott

Only in the rancid political swamp of Florida would a guy like Scott have the gall to run for office, bankrolling his run for the governorship with the fortune he accumulated while his empire soaked U.S. taxpayers for hundreds of millions dollars. His campaign mantra, slightly paraphrased: "Hey, lighten up! I never got indicted!"

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/07/04/1715119/bill-and-rick-are-their-own-worst.html#ixzz0sieBREa2>

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[Continued from Page 1]

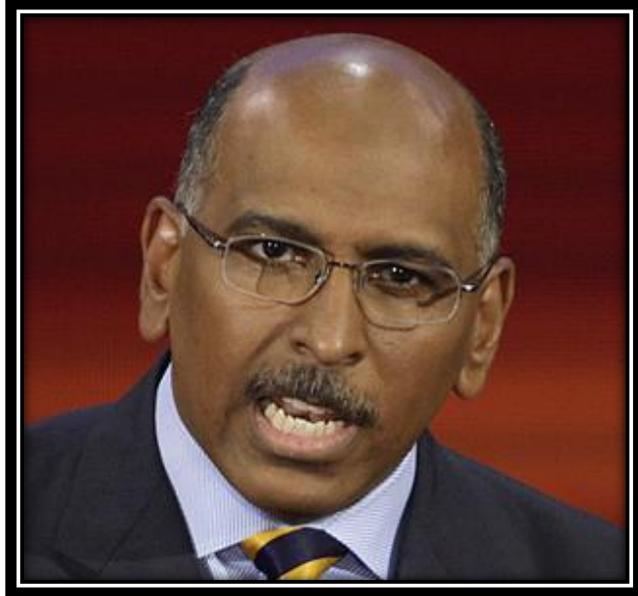
Mason said top party officials knew about Victory Strategies from the start. He also said they knew about a severance package at the heart of a civil suit Greer has filed against the party. Mason said he will seek depositions before the Aug. 24 Republican primary, in which McCollum faces Naples businessman Rick Scott in a hot race for governor. Mason said he will also seek to take depositions from House Speaker-designate Dean Cannon, R-Winter Park, Senate President-designate Mike Haridopolos, R-Merritt Island, and state Sen. John Thrasher, R-St. Augustine, who succeeded Greer as chairman of the state party last February.

Gov. Charlie Crist will also be questioned for the defense, Mason said. Crist was a Republican for almost all of his career, and hand-picked Greer for the chairmanship. He left the GOP April 29 and is running for the U.S. Senate as an independent. Mason said Greer's prosecution is "politically motivated" because of his support of Crist against GOP frontrunner Marco Rubio and his insistence on enforcing the severance payout for resigning as chairman.

After he resigned, Greer sued the state party to enforce a severance agreement providing continued consulting fees and family insurance. He was indicted later on six felony counts including money laundering, organized fraud and four counts of grand theft. The state alleges that while Greer was chairman he and Delmar Johnson, the party executive director, secretly set up Victory Strategies and contracted with the firm to raise major donations to the state party -- taking a 10 percent commission, which Greer and Johnson split 60/40. The indictment also said Greer directed some cash payments to victory strategies by the RPOF.

<http://www.pnj.com/article/20100705/NEWS01/100705005>

Politico: Kristol calls on Steele to resign



"Dear Michael,

You are, I know, a patriot. So I ask you to consider, over this July 4 weekend, doing an act of service for the country you love: Resign as chairman of the Republican party."

Bill Kristol

Weekly Standard Editor Bill Kristol -- a leading voice of Republican support for the war in Afghanistan -- is calling on Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele to resign after Steele was [filmed](#) deriding the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan as a hopeless war of President Obama's choosing.

Kristol's urgency comes in part from a view among the war's supporters that without staunch Republican backing, Democratic skepticism about Afghanistan would soon push Obama to withdraw troops.

http://www.politico.com/blogs/bensmith/0710/Kristol_calls_on_Steele_to_resign.html?showall

ICYMI: 'Four Horsemen's' Hush-Money Cover-up Leading RPOF to Apocalypse This Fall



Florida Democrats joined with Republican Rick Scott in demanding Wednesday that gubernatorial candidate Bill McCollum appoint an independent prosecutor to continue the criminal case against the state's former GOP chairman, saying the current probe has forced the attorney general into a legal conflict. Florida Statewide Prosecutor William Shepherd, a McCollum appointee, this week released documents and digital recordings from the investigation of ex-GOP party boss Jim Greer. The files show McCollum played a central role in triggering the Republican Party's own review of Greer's spending practices, which eventually led to the attorney general's call for criminal investigation.

"I think McCollum played a much bigger role, behind the scenes, than I think we realized," Johnson told Greer in the March 25 phone call. "Going back to the beginning when he called the governor and said he wanted to get rid of you. He wouldn't do so publicly. But a lot of this is coming from his people."

Johnson later in the conversation came up with a name grouping McCollum, House Speaker-designate Dean Cannon, R-Winter Park, Senate President-designate Mike Haridopolos, R-Merritt Island, and Greer's successor as chairman, John Thrasher. Johnson termed them, "the four horsemen."

http://www.newsserviceflorida.com/cgi/as_web.exe?rev2010+D+6040525

ICYMI: Florida Today: Dems want public to sift through records

The Florida Democratic Party wants to turn concerned citizens into citizen sleuths.

It has launched a Wiki investigation of Jim Greer, the former Republican Party Chairman under criminal investigation for diverting party donations to his own consulting company.

Their goal: To find out what other Republican Party officials have dirty hands.

"This is our chance as citizens to make sure that we get to the bottom of this shameful scandal. That is why we have posted everything for you to look through and are asking you to let us know what you find,"
Florida Democratic Party spokesman
Eric Jotkoff

McClatchy: GOP's false talking point: Jones Act blocks Gulf help

From former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin to Arizona Sen. John McCain to junior members of the House of Representatives, conservative Republicans have accused President Barack Obama of failing to do all he can to help clean up the Gulf of Mexico oil spill because he hasn't waived a U.S. maritime law called the Jones Act. That statute, established in 1920, requires that all goods transported between U.S. ports be carried on U.S.-flagged, U.S.-built and U.S.-owned ships crewed by U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Critics say that's needlessly excluded foreign-flagged vessels that could have helped.

Armed and the other Republican critics are wrong. Maritime law experts, government officials and independent researchers say that the claim is false. The Jones Act isn't an impediment at all, they say, and it hasn't blocked anything.

In a news briefing last week, Coast Guard Adm. Thad Allen said he'd received "no requests for Jones Act waivers" from foreign vessels or countries. "If the vessels are operating outside state waters, which is three miles and beyond, they don't require a waiver," he said. FactCheck.org, a nonprofit website operated by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center, analyzed claims that failure to waive the Jones Act is blocking foreign-flagged vessels from assisting in the Gulf. It concluded last week that "In reality, the Jones Act has yet to be an issue in the response efforts."

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/06/30/96831/gops-false-talking-point-jones.html#ixzz0sT3K3Q9c>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Jefferson-Jackson Dinner



Saturday, July 17, 2010
The Westin Diplomat
3555 South Ocean Drive
Hollywood, FL 33019

Questions?

Please contact Christina Boltin or Nicholas Pellito at 850-222-3411



Save the Date to our
Annual Jefferson-Jackson Dinner

Saturday, July 17, 2010

*The Westin Diplomat
3555 South Ocean Dr.
Hollywood, FL 33019*

Hotel Information

Superior Room Rate \$169.00 + taxes*

To receive the special room rate please reference the "Florida Democratic Party".

Room Reservation Line 1-888-627-9057

**There are a limited amount of rooms at this rate, please book
your rooms as soon as possible.**

Questions?

Please contact Christina Boltin or Nicholas Pellito at 850.222.3411.

Your contribution will be used in connection with federal elections, unless you designate otherwise, and is subject to the limitations and prohibitions of the Federal Election Campaign Act.

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2010 Jefferson-Jackson Dinner

Individual Ticket/Table Purchase Form

Full Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (home) _____ (work) _____ (cell) _____

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

*The above information is required by Federal law.

A. INDIVIDUAL TICKETS: _____ @ \$180.00 each = \$ _____

B. DEC MEMBER TICKETS: _____ @ \$150.00 each = \$ _____

DEC: _____

C. RESERVED TABLE (TEN TICKETS) _____ @ \$1800.00 each = \$ _____

D. DEC RESERVED TABLE (TEN TICKETS) _____ @ \$1500.00 each = \$ _____

DEC: _____

TOTAL CONTRIBUTION: \$ _____

Email address (for email confirmation): _____

Please provide the name to be displayed on the table topper:

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IF CHECK, IS PAYMENT ATTACHED? (Circle one) YES NO

Checks should be made payable to the Florida Democratic Party, 214 South Bronough Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301.

CREDIT CARD AUTHORIZATION Circle One: MasterCard Visa American Express

Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Authorized Signature: _____ Security Code: _____

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RECEIPT FOR CONTRIBUTION

Thank you for your purchase of _____ tickets and _____ tables and your contribution of \$ _____ for the Florida Democratic Party's 2010 Jefferson-Jackson Dinner. We look forward to seeing you on July 17th at the Westin Diplomat in Hollywood, FL. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. All tickets will be distributed at will call beginning at 3:00 p.m.

Your contribution will be used in connection with federal elections, unless you designate otherwise, and are subject to the limitations and prohibitions of the Federal Election Campaign Act. To contribute you must be a United States Citizen or legal resident and at least 18 years of age.

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